28 433 434 [435] Cost for 6-pound blanket:

Wool, 9 pounds (varying with year and season)	$11.25

Labor:

	Days
Purchase of wool	1
Cleaning and washing, actual labor (covering 2 or 3 days' time)	1
Carding	2
Spinning	2
Weaving	2
Total	8

[435]

Asking price	$25.00
Average sales price	20.00
Gross profit	8.75
Return for labor per day	1.09 plus
Return per day for total days spent on part-time basis	.58 plus

Comment: Although involving only 8 days' actual labor, the work would be spread over about 15 days. Weavers usually would have to take 1 or 2 whole days off to get wood and some days or parts of days when the weather might be unpleasant. In addition, repairs to equipment and houses must be made, perhaps an animal must be looked after, and so on.

Belt weaving:

Equipment:

Loom, home-made

Costs:

Materials, thread and yarn	?
Labor, part time	2 days
Asking price	$1.25
[435] Actual selling price	1.00
Gross profit, estimated	.80–.90
Daily labor return (part time, probably 5–6 hours)	.40–.45

294 433 434 *Clothing manufacture:*

Capital investment:	
Sewing machine	$40.00–150.00
Expenses:	
Materials (for work on order)	None
Returns per day (from various workers' statements)	$0.75–$1.30

Comment: Most workers, especially men, are part-time operators; many work only on order, when daily income for elaborate garments may be much higher. Income figures are hence misleading, as they are based on steady work on low-priced garments.

[585] [431] [435] Clothing made for exchange at weddings usually is only single-stitched; regular clothing is double-stitched. Prices for sewing men's cotton trousers vary from 10 to 15 centavos for single stitching and 15 or 25 centavos for double stitching. Men's shirts vary in cost from 25 to 40 centavos (or more for fancy rayon shirts). Women's aprons cost 12 centavos.

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[p.94]
Sierra Tarascans

163 For the years 1936–39, inclusive, there were 690 registered births in Cherán. The sex ratio was very nearly 1:1, with 347 male births and 343 female births. The distribution is shown in table 11. It is of interest that great excess of female births occurred in 1936, reaching a peak in June of that year, while a considerable excess of male births occurred in 1939, also reaching a peak in June.

TABLE 12.—*Marriages in Cherán, 1937-39*[1]

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Age of married person	Married men		Married women	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
13			3	2.0
14	1	0.7	23	15.4
15	2	1.3	49	32.9
16	12	8.1	26	17.4
17	8	5.4	9	6.0
18	32	21.5	6	4.0
19	12	8.1	2	1.3
20	15	10.1	3	2.0
21	5	3.4		
22	10	6.7		
23	5	3.4	2	1.3
24			2	1.3
25	9	6.0	5	3.4
26	5	3.4	1	.7
27	1	.7		
28	5	3.4	3	2.0
30	3	2.0	2	1.3
31	1	.7		
32	2	1.3		
35	4	2.7	2	1.3
37	2	1.3	1	.7
38	1	.7		
39			1	.7
40	4	2.7	2	1.3
45	3	2.0	3	2.0
47	1	.7		
48			1	.7
53	1	.7		
55	1	.7	1	.7
60	2	1.3	2	1.3
80	1	.7		
83	1	.7		
Total	149	100.0	149	100.0

[1] Data prepared by Dr. Emmanuel Palacios, Departamento Autónomo de Asuntos Indígenas, Mexico.

Data on the 149 marriages for 1937, 1938, and 1939 are shown in table 12. The age data are subject to the same probable inaccuracy in age estimates as is the case with the data on adult men. However, inasmuch as many Cherán residents are today sensitive about the early age of marriages and it is known that the ages given for young persons about to be married are often exaggerated, the data underscore the early age of marriage. In round numbers, 2 percent of girls married were only 13, 15 percent were 14, 32 percent were 15, 17 percent were 16, and 6 percent were 17. Only 2 percent of girls married were aged 20. It is significant that no marriages were recorded for girls aged 21 or 22. In all probability all, or nearly all, marriages recorded after this age were remarriages.

582 The earliest age recorded for married males
585 is 14, this age group comprising 0.7 percent of the total male marriages. However, there is reason to believe that the age of males is falsified at marriage more than that of females. Most marriages, according to the statistics, take place at 16 or after; 8 percent of males marry at the age of 16. Five percent were married at 17, 21 percent at 18, 8 percent at 19, and 10 percent at 20. None were married at age 24, but 6 percent were married at 25. Some marriages listed at this age are probably remarriages, and certainly few first marriages take place after 25. The emphasis placed upon marriage as a normal state is indicated by the considerable age of some persons married. Two women and two men are shown as married at 60, while one man is shown as married at 80 and another at 82.

No particular season of marriage preference is evident if marriage frequencies are analyzed by months, despite assertions that most marriages take place in the winter after harvest. Evidently marriages take place when people have resources, regardless of the time of year. The fluctuations from year to year probably could be accounted for in terms of variable economic conditions. It must be remembered that the month of marriage reported is the time of the civil registry and church wedding. Probably the majority of marriages are consummated before these events.

In addition to the statistical data, even earlier marriages are believed to take place. One girl, whose age was alleged by several people independently to be only 15, had four children. Gossip told of another case of a girl of 10 years who was "half married," that is, the groom's parents did not yet permit him to sleep with his wife. But at the age of 14 the girl was said to have had two children. Before the Tarascans are censured for the practice of such early marriages, it should be born in mind that Bishop Quiroga, who had so much influence on the Tarascans, in his ordinances authorized the marriage of boys over 14 and girls over 12 (Arriaga, 1938).

Data on family composition and fertility
163 were obtained by interviews with 53 families
842 where the wife was 47 years of age or older and had not borne children recently (table 13).

[text continues on p.947]

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

608 The *compadres* both have the duty of visiting one another when one of them is sick or has encountered some difficulty and, if it is possible, help him in some form. When one of the *compadres* has a duty (that is, a wedding, funeral, *mayordomía*, house roofing, house moving, or fiesta duty), it is the duty of the other to accompany him as many days as may be necessary. (The same mutual obligation exists between godparents and godchildren.)

When a godson kidnaps a girl with intention of marrying her, it is the duty of the father of the youth, before all else, to go to the house of the godfather of the youth, that is his (the father's) *compadre* and give him the news so that they may present themselves together in the house of the bride. This is a duty of the godfather. This duty (the father) has toward the three godfathers, of baptism, confirmation, and crown.

The duties of the marriage *compadres* are limited solely to accompanying each other when one has some obligation (such as wedding, *mayordomía*, etc.), the moving or termination of a house, and the duty of saluting each other with the name of "*compadre*."

Method of selecting *compadres*. In selecting the *compadres* some of the following characteristics are taken into consideration:

1. When a family wishes to have *compadres*, in general if it is rich it endeavors to find *compadres* in the same category.

2. If the family is poor, it tries to have a *compadre* in its same category, as it has been seen that sometimes when a poor person seeks a rich man as *compadre*, the latter accepts but afterwards he is ashamed to say "*compadre*" to the other who is somewhat poor. For this reason the latter (rich *compadres*) are not common.

3. Many times they (the parents) try to find a *compadre* who knows how to read. They say this is [212] with the object that the infant will also be intelligent and know how to read. This is a belief among many, but it is not universal.

4. On other occasions efforts are made to find a *compadre* who is distinguished as a valiant person, in the sense of having bravery or, better, to be bold to fight when occasion offers—this, in general, indicates what among us is meant when a person is called "valiant"—with the object that the child will grow up and may be equally valiant as his godfather.

5. There are also cases in which a godfather is selected because he has done a favor on some past occasion or because of hope to receive some favor in the future. In general, this is the method of selecting a godfather. All usually try to find their *compadres* in an equal (social) category with these exceptions already noted.

608 The marriage *compadres:* In order to recognize one another as *compadres* of marriage, it is necessary to 585 perform a certain act or ceremony in the moments when the last act of the marriage is about to terminate. This act takes place in the house or the kitchen (usually the latter) of the bridegroom. Present are the t'árepiti dïosv uandari (marriage manager), the parents

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

608 of the bride and groom together with all their brothers,
585 sisters, and first cousins, in short, all the people the bride or groom may call aunt or uncle. Only these have the right to become *compadres*. Inside the building a mat is spread on the floor. The parents of the
[516] bride and groom enter first and kneel on the mat, where they remain during the ceremony. The others follow. They also kneel, but before kneeling they embrace one another, saying "In the future you will be my *compadre* (*comadre*) of Heaven and I pray God that we never offend one another. *Buenos tardes, compadre.*" One after the other repeats the same words. Sometimes they are in Tarascan: "Kumbéskari ka auándaju anápueskari ka uéke diósa éskaksa no méni ambé arijperoka. Na čúskuskiá kumba." Meantime the t'aɪépiti is iterating that all have the right to be *compadres*, that is to say, the aunts and uncles. (The language used by the marriage manager is not a fixed speech.) When this act is completed, all have the right to call each other *compadres* in the future.

608 To the preceding account a few additions must be made. Relatives may be sought as godparents of a child, especially of baptism, but only rarely is this done. The reason usually is a desire to save money, as between relatives there need be no ceremony or expense. *Compadres* of confirmation are selected to accompany the child to church at the time of confirmation. *Compadres* of the crown or circumcision are normally sought when the child is between the ages of 6 months and 10 years. The child is taken to the image of any saint wearing a crown (the *mayordomía* saints kept at private houses are used, not those of the church), and the godmother places the saint's crown on the child. She says an "Our Father" and burns a candle. When she has finished,
[782] she hands the crown to the *mayordomo* or his wife to replace on the saint and pays from 6 to 25 centavos. Normally only one *compadre* of the crown is sought.[31]

[171] In some parts of Mexico—for example, among the Mayo of Sonora—if a child dies, the same godparents are sought for the next child born. The Tarascans are more apt to seek another godparent, believing that the death of the child was from the "luck" of the godparents. Any request to be a godparent may be refused.

In view of the fact that the duties of god-

[31] In other towns, a godparent of the crown may be sought at any time, especially if a child has been sickly for some time, or merely because the parents like someone. I received requests to be godfather of the crown in other towns where I visited very briefly; I never received a request to be a godfather of any type in Cherán.

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[p. 180 b]

583 refused, as he was interested in the girl he had hoped to steal the previous Sunday and the present girl he knew visited one of the houses of assignation. José was then put in jail, but when his mother stood responsible for him he was let out in a couple of days. The girl's mother went around town talking about the wrong that had been done, while José went around town telling everyone bad things about the girl. Eventually José had to run away and no one knew where he had gone.

Normally, sexual relations are begun between the bride and groom soon after she is stolen. [608] Permission of the girl's baptismal godfather (and perhaps the godfather of confirmation) should be sought and is usually given; to refuse might cause hard feeling. Cases were cited where the godfather and the boy's parents became very angry with each other over a refusal. On the other hand, evidently the boy is stimulated to accumulate the property necessary to hold the wedding if sex relations are not permitted.

The stealing of a girl sets in motion a complex series of events constituting perhaps the most complicated aspect of Cherán culture.

The following account of marriage is one written by Pedro Chávez. Parts in brackets represent additional comments made by Sr. Chávez on other occasions or data gathered from other sources. All the features of the wedding were verified by observation and utilization of other sources of information.

A TARASCAN WEDDING

Marriage among the Tarascans of the town of Cherán embraces many points of great importance. In the first place, it is now a custom that the groom, when he desires to enter into marriage, steals the girl. This theft consists of catching her and carrying her off forcibly or, sometimes, willingly without force. But in either case, as much in the first instance as in the second, the bride goes in accordance with an agreement made in advance and the action is merely feigned by the two.

585 When the theft of the bride is completed [by taking the girl to the house of an uncle or other relative or, more rarely, to the house of the groom], the parents of the groom proceed to the house of the bride and appear before her parents. This act is called the puátperankua or "the pardon." It should be taken into account that in order to present themselves before the parents of the bride, the parents of the groom must take a person called t'arepiti diósa uandári [who is a professional

585 marriage manager]. The first act of this person is to arrive at the house of the parents of the bride, saluting them very respectfully, and immediately falling on his knees, accompanied by the parents of the groom and various other persons most near to the father [especially the brothers and sisters of the groom's father]. Then the marriage manager says a Catholic prayer, making reference to the marriage of Joseph and Mary, how it was, and that thus it is necessary to effect the marriage they propose to bring about. This act completed, he offers a cigarette to the offended party [that is, the father of the bride]. If the latter receives the cigarette, it is an indication that he does not find the marriage undesirable. If he does not receive it, it is an indication that he wishes to be begged with many favors to give his consent, but finally he always gives his consent. [Because if he did not, the girl would be returned to her parents and no one would marry her. The girl's father is often very annoyed. He may scold his wife for letting the daughter be stolen and he often refuses to receive the boy's relatives for several days, going off and hiding in the mountains in order to show his anger and to cool down a bit.] Immediately [on giving his consent] the father of the bride calls together all his neighbors and principal relatives, others [602] coming by themselves later. This reunion is with the [273] object of drinking with the bride's father, for the parents and companions of the groom have brought a quantity of liquor, until all are very drunk, which concludes the first ceremony. The marriage manager reminds everyone to await them again within 8 days, that is to say, that they [the groom's relatives] will return within 8 days.

Eight days after the first ceremony, both the father of the bride and the father of the groom assemble all their relatives. Four or five days before they are notified so that the relatives of the groom will each prepare a quantity of bread costing not less than 1 peso and not more than 5 pesos, while the relatives of the bride make tamales with chile and meat of the kind we call nákatamali. Once the day arrives, all [437] assemble in the house of the parents of the bride and begin to exchange. The parents and relatives of the groom give 4 or 5 pieces of bread to all those of the other group. The latter in their turn give 6 or 8 tamales, continuing until all the bread and tamales have been given away. [Each relative of the groom gives [273] bread to one or more of the relatives of the bride in accordance with his wishes.] This affair also ends in drunkenness. During all this time the bride has been left at the house of the relative in whom the groom has most confidence, but this day she is brought to be present at the function.

[217] The following day after the function referred to, the couple present themselves at the civil registry to make their application to marry, accompanied by the closer relatives. The authorities notify them to present themselves within 8 days to effect the civil marriage. [183] [This represents an ideal case. Often the application for marriage and the civil marriage may not occur for

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

585
[183] weeks or even months. In at least one case the religious marriage took place before the civil marriage, although on the same day. However, the priest normally refuses to perform the service unless the certificate of civil marriage is presented. The relatives accompanying the couple are parents, uncles and male first cousins of the groom, the parents and close relatives of the bride, and the godmothers of the groom and the godmother for the wedding. The latter stands by the couple when the legal formula is read by the secretary or the mayor. All the relatives sign the papers as witnesses. Sometimes the secretary or mayor makes a little speech, pointing out to the husband that now he has to support his bride and can not expect her father to go on supporting her. He also may deliver a homily on behavior, pointing out that a married man shouldn't have two women or a married woman two men, warning them to avoid divorce, etc.]

After following the course indicated by the authorities, the proper steps are taken for the religious marriage. On the vespers of the day of the marriage they celebrate the t'irénkua or the dance. For this the parents of the bride hire a band with the object of going to the house of the groom with the music to take him the clothing called Aríperata, or gifts, which consist of a pair of shoes, two or three pairs of trousers (*calzones*), three shirts, and a hat. The cost of this is divided by the godparents and relatives of the bride in this way: one pair of trousers, a shirt, and a sash from each of the two godfathers of the bride and the rest from her father. The groom is dressed in this clothing by the grandfathers, grandmothers, siblings, and first cousins of the bride. [One of the latter
[602] actually dresses the groom. The groom is called tembuča and his siblings and cousins of both sexes are called tembučas. Similarly, the bride is called tembunga and her siblings and cousins are called tembungas. The female tembučas give the female tembungas narrow colored ribbons or bands to wear in their hair.] Immediately the dressing is completed, the musicians play some regional tune and the groom has to dance, with which ends the affair of the gifts of the groom. [Atole is sometimes brought to this function also. The custom seems to be decaying.]

On the day of the wedding the parents and godparents of the groom, together with the grandfathers, uncles and cousins, are those charged with going to the house of the bride very early in the morning when the bells ring the first call to Mass to take her clothing also, that is to say, the Aríperata. [The bride has returned to her own house a few days before the wedding. During this time the groom may visit her freely.] This consists of three rebozos, a shirt and blouse, earrings, *corales* (red glass beads), sash, and a pair of shoes. The cost of these is divided as follows: one rebozo from each godfather, these being the blue rebozos of Paracho, and the father of the groom a very fine white rebozo [it is not actually white but one of the remarkably fine mixed color rebozos from Tangancicuaro, costing anywhere from 20 to 80 pesos] and all the other

● 585 articles. When the bride is dressed [she wears all three of the new rebozos], the parents of the couple and the principal godparents and relatives, together with the musicians brought by the parents of the groom, accompany the couple to the church to effectuate the marriage before the priest. [During the Mass a ring is placed on a finger of the bride. The groom can bring his own ring, but if he has not done so, a ring lent by the priest is used. The priest also puts silver money in the hands of the groom who in turn places it in the hands of the bride. If the groom has not brought money, the priest lends it to him. However, it is believed that the groom should bring the money and that the more he brings the greater the benediction for their life and the more fortunate the couple will be. There is said to be no use of the collar, chain, or ribbon used in some churches in Oaxaca.]

After the wedding, all leave the Mass and go to the house of the bride's parents, where she and all her relatives are left, the rest of the party going to the house of the groom's parents. Later, in about an hour, all return to the house of the bride's father [first calling for the bride's godparents to invite them] to escort the bride and all her relatives to breakfast [at the house of the groom's father] which consists only of a piece of bread and small cup of chocolate. On arriving at the house of the groom's father, the [male] guests seat themselves in a place previously prepared. The preparation consists of placing some logs of wood for seats [in two rows with others sometimes arranged as a table between the rows at a somewhat higher level] and at one of the ends they place the image of some saint of the Catholic religion [most commonly a picture of the saint] before which is a lighted candle and flowers [and sometimes an incense burner with copal incense]. Before the guests are served, it is the duty of the marriage manager to say a prayer in thanks. It should be noted that the first places [before the altar] are reserved for the marriage manager and the godfathers of both bride and groom and that only the men sit on these seats, the women being seated apart. The godmothers also sit apart [usually on mats in the
[608] center of the courtyard], the godmother of the groom being distinguished by ribbons tied in her hair. These ribbons are given and tied on the hair by the godmother's *comadres*, granddaughters and sisters-in-law. [Ribbons are tied in the hair of all the godmothers of the groom, and of the godmother of the wedding.]

Upon completing the breakfast, all the relatives of the bride return to her house, taking the bride with them again and not being accompanied by the relatives of the groom. In the meantime the musicians play in the house of the groom. This is usually between 10 and 11 of the morning. [Meantime many guests may drop in and will be fed, being seated in a different place
[554] from the relatives. Everyone is welcome because the more who attend, the more prestige attaches to the wedding. As outsiders, the members of the staff were usually especially welcome, as apparently we gave special *eclat* to the function.] Meantime all the sib-

● 585 lings and cousins and grandparents of the groom together have hired another band and at this time they separate themselves from the rest of the groom's relatives. [They go through the streets with the musicians, ultimately going to the house of one of the groom's uncles where they eat dinner. The remainder of the groom's relatives and the guests eat at the house of the groom. Tortillas, kurúndas (tamales), and čurípo (beef broth with cabbage, chile, and chunks of beef) are served.]

After the dinner is served, the party is prepared to go for the bride. This is called the p'ipejperakua. The party consists of the parents of the groom and their brothers and all the friends of the parents. [574] [123] [Actually not all go; those who are invited to go on the party are given iris leaves which they carry with them. Staff members at weddings were frequently given invitations to accompany the party in this same form.] The same relatives of the bride are all assembled at her house, ready, as are the friends of the parents. [The party of the groom's relatives is accompanied by musicians. The party goes first to the house of the godparents of the bride. They serenade the house outside and then the closer relatives enter the house. They form a circle before the godfather and the godmother of the bride. The marriage manager makes a long but informal speech, asking permission to take the bride. The godfather replies, giving his permission. All present then shake hands with the godfather and godmother, making a movement simulating kissing the hand. The group leaves the house, accompanied by the godparents.] Arriving at the house of the bride's parents, the groom's relatives immediately ask for the bride. [Actually, only the closer relatives again go inside, accompanied by the musicians. The marriage manager again asks for the bride.] When consent is granted, they start for the groom's house, carrying with them the clothing they have ready. [For a big wedding a procession of a hundred or more people may have formed by the time the group returns to the groom's house.] In the meantime the other relatives of the boy [the siblings, cousins, and grandparents] arrive with their musicians and do the same [that is, they take off the siblings, cousins, and grandparents of the bride] who carry quantities of clothing. This consists of shirts for men and women, trousers for men, jackets for men and women, sashes for women, and bags, and tortilla cloths, the latter two objects to be given the groom at the time all the others are changing clothing and bread. In the house of the groom's father the guests are all seated as before. [The godmothers are again seated on mats in the center and the bride sits for a time beside the godmother of baptism. Guests continue to arrive and additional ribbons are tied in the hair of the godmothers and long and elaborate paper ornaments fastened to sticks are placed in the hair. All the relatives of the groom give cigarettes to the groom's father when they arrive in the courtyard for the first time and also give cigarettes to the godfathers

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

● 585 of the groom. To the mother and the godmothers of the groom are given 5 or 10 centavos each. The form of presentation is always the same; the money is placed in a china plate covered with a cloth. The recipient tips the plate so the money slides into her hand without the amount being visible to anyone else. The recipient shakes the hand of the donor and in the case of the mother, who is standing, curtseys. Sometimes money is given to the males in lieu of cigarettes. If the family is large, the godmothers and the mother may receive from 8 to 15 pesos. Shortly after the arrival of the bride's party, the parents and uncles of the bride and groom, and sometimes other relatives, all enter the kitchen. There the marriage manager performs a ceremony (described on p. 103) by which all become *compadres*.]

The father of the groom now orders the distribution to all the relatives of the bride [and in observed weddings, to everyone present] of one piece of bread each. The bread was prepared in advance and is an obligation of the father. This is called the ƛaƛáki t'iréŋkua. Ordinarily these pieces are in the form of a crown which we call kanákua. [The *compadres* or brothers of the groom's father help him with the distribution, handing him a piece of bread which the father himself usually hands to each guest on a lacquered tray. (pl. 7, upper right). The order of events in the account here does not coincide with any wedding witnessed. The distribution of bread usually came after the exchange of clothing and bread described below. Only if there were to be little or no clothing exchange or dancing would the distribution of bread be this early in the proceedings. The time of distribution is regarded as indicating the probable length of the wedding; the later it is distributed, the longer the wedding will last. In the case of the latest distribution observed, the wedding lasted 3 days. Similarly, the beginning of the drinking usually did not take place until the clothing and bread exchange was well under way.]

[273] When this act [the distribution of the bread] was finished, they begin to bring out the bottles of *charanda* and all begin to drink until they are quite drunk. It should be noted that only the relatives of the groom have the right to buy and carry liquor, the relatives of the bride drinking what is offered them [which is abundant. The person who produces a bottle drinks from it first.] While they are drinking, at the same time they are making the exchange of the clothing and bread in the following form.

All of the women relatives of the bride such as the maternal and paternal aunts give clothing to the uncles and aunts and other relatives (of the groom) as well as the parents, who are those who receive the best clothing. These in their turn in recompense return bread in a quantity not more than $1.50 and not less than $1.00, while the musicians are playing regional tunes and *jarabes* and others are dancing. [For a somewhat different sequence of events with some additional details, see the account of the Sánchez wedding below.] In a word, there is a very great movement.

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

585 [Each person giving a garment presents it to a relative of the groom who had given bread to the person at the ceremony 8 days after the pardon.] In another locality the same acts are being performed by the others who have a separate group of musicians. These are the brothers and grandparents of the bride and groom. Comes a moment when the groom is taken by the arms and they hang about his neck bags and tortilla cloths (*servilletas*). The groom is made to dance to two tunes. With this he leaves [the brothers, cousins and grandparents] and the remainder continue drinking and dancing until it is late and time to leave, only the bride remaining in the house of the groom, with which ends the events of the day of the wedding.

The following day is another small fiesta called the kauíjanekua. On this day it is an obligation of the parents of the groom to go to give thanks to the godparents of baptism and of the marriage in their houses, accompanied by their close relatives, making their thanks concrete by all getting drunk in the house of these godparents. On the other hand the brothers, sisters, cousins of both sexes, and grandparents of the bride hire musicians and go to the house of the groom to wash all the pots used the previous day, which is an obligation of the bride, although actually it does not result this way as they arrange to drink *charanda* and very few pots are washed. When they are all good and drunk again, celebrating this drunkenness among the cousins, brothers, and grandparents of the bride and groom, the marriage events end. As a regular thing there has been an expenditure of between 200 and 300 pesos for all the parts of the marriage ceremony, which must be paid by the father of the groom. [Written by P. Chávez, Cherán, Michoacán, October 10, 1940.]

The foregoing account represents the thoughtful view of a Cherán wedding as seen by an intelligent and well-informed native resident of the town. As is to be expected, certain aspects of the celebration are overlooked. Some of these have been inserted in brackets in the account given above; others will be added below. The Chávez account also presents a slightly different order from that observed at several weddings. In all probability the Chávez account is in part somewhat inaccurate in its order; very likely it also represents an expression of one of several possible arrangements. Some weddings are much more elaborate than the generalized description, while others are much simpler.

The most elaborate wedding during the time of the study was that of Samuel Sánchez, son of Antonio Sánchez, a well-to-do farmer with a large number of relatives (pl. 6, left, center). The most significant points are discussed below. Samuel stole his bride about the middle of July,

585 and the wedding occurred on August 17. On August 16 the women of the household, aided by relatives, soaked and washed between 5 and 6 *fanegas* of maize for tamales and tortillas. Also, a beef was killed, cut up, and placed in the storage loft. The evening of the same day new clothing was taken to the groom by the bride's relatives, and he was dressed, everything but his pants being changed in the patio. The dressing should be done by a male first cousin of the bride. (Agustín, for example, dressed the groom when the daughter of his mother's sister was married.)

The wedding in church took place at about 4 a. m. So early a wedding is unusual, partly because it costs more, but the Sánchez family obviously planned to make the most of the wedding. The bride was dressed in new clothing before the wedding. After the wedding the bride and her party went to her parents' house. Between 10 and 11 o'clock they returned to the

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

[p.184 b]

● 585 groom's house, where breakfast was served. The godmother of baptism and the godmother of the wedding were seated on mats in the patio with the bride at the right hand of the godmother of baptism (pl. 7, right, center; fig. 18). Both received gifts of ribbons and coins, but only the godmother of the wedding had the paper ornaments on sticks placed in her hair (pl. 7, lower right). When breakfast was finished, the bride and her relatives returned to her house.

A group went out with the musicians and brought back a large quantity of bread. On such trips with the musicians a direct route is never followed, particularly on the return, but a circuitous route is taken to display the bread and the crowd to as many as possible. As soon as the bride's relatives had left, dinner began to be served to the relatives of the groom, the men eating under the shed separately from the women. The bread was put on a table deco-

1: Beals E-5 (1940-1941) 1946

NU34 Tarasco NU34
Sierra Tarascans

[p. 184]

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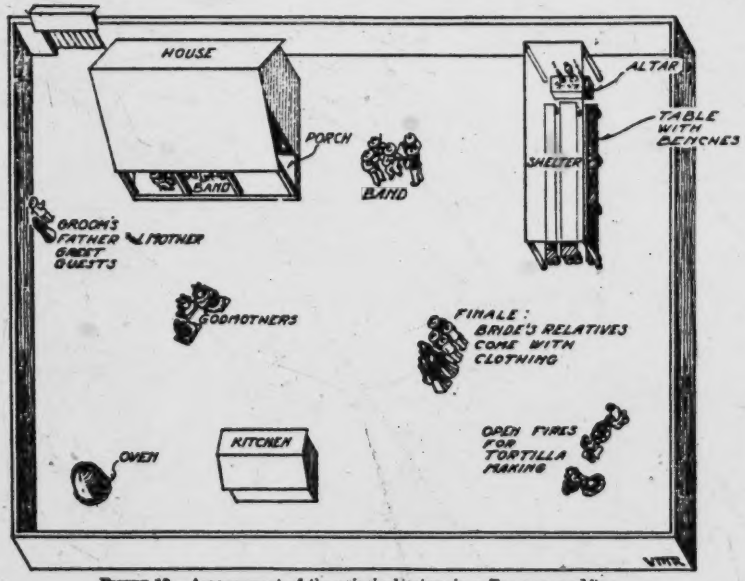

FIGURE 18.—Arrangement of the principal actors in a Tarascan wedding.

585 rated with ferns. The serving of food to the men was done by brothers-in-law of the groom's father. Cigarettes were passed around by one of the groom's uncles.

About 12:45 p. m. a second band arrived. While the mother was not occupied she sat on a mat in front of the house where she received coins from guests. The father received cigarettes, which were placed beside the altar under the shed until needed, when they were passed about to the guests. After eating, many went to the house of one of the other relatives of the groom where they ate again. The bride's relatives were given dinner at her home by her parents.

Iris leaves were distributed to the men selected to go for the bride, and they left with the band hired by the groom's father. The godmothers moved under the house porch where they sat on mats. A procession of women came in bearing lacquered trays on their heads filled with fruit and bottles of soda pop. These women were female relatives of the groom who had not helped in the kitchen work. The soda pop was given to the men who had been assisting, while the fruit was given to the women assistants. Some of the men fastened quantities of breads and cookies to strings suspended from the roof of the shed where the bride's male relatives would sit again on their return.

A number of women bearing cornstalks and flowers (cannas, dahlias, and calla lilies) left with the second band and some of the men, including the groom's father. They were going to get bread.

In the meantime the bride and her relatives arrived. The bride's male relatives went to the shed where they all grabbed at the breads and cookies, each trying to get the most. The female relatives sat in a group in another place (see fig. 18) with the clothing before them arranged to make the greatest possible display. The bride sat beside the godmothers. She was barefoot and accompanied by a small girl.

The first lot of bread was brought in. The godmothers with the first band, which had returned with the bride, went out into the street to meet the bread. About 15 minutes after this the bride went into the house where she stayed the remainder of the ceremony, accompained by a number of younger girls.

585 The exchange of clothing for bread now began. The father and mother of the groom were the object of most attention and every effort was made to keep giving them clothing too rapidly for them to remove it. Each donor placed the garment on the recipient. Occasionally the father would succeed in getting away and dash into the house where he would remove it all. Despite this, at one time he wore about six shirts and four or five pairs of extra *calzones* (trousers). Three or four times during this procedure, the groom came hastily into the courtyard and entered the house to leave the bags (*morales*) and tortilla cloths he had been given.

After some exchange had gone on and part of the repayment in bread had been accomplished, a group brought in seven more large baskets of bread. Some of the older women accompanying the party brought breads made in the shape of bulls. They rushed about holding the breads between their two hands and pretended to gore others until other women finally seized them and broke them to pieces. These breads in the [532] form of bulls (and sometimes other animals) are provided by the grandparents of the groom but are used only in the period from January until after Carnival according to some informants. However, this was August, so the informants must have been in error.

585 Before the exchange of clothing and bread was completed, the godmothers began the
535 dancing. No one was supposed to dance until
608 the godmothers began. All the early dancers were women, mostly elderly, dancing by themselves or in pairs. When the music began to play for a second dance, elderly women with more breads in the shape of bulls began running at various persons standing around and pretending to gore them with the animal until they began to dance.

585 The dancing was interrupted at this point by the eruption of a group of men and women into the courtyard carrying baskets, cooking pots, *comals*, water buckets, etc. Two men carried on a pole a huge copper pot in which [482] tamales had been cooked. This group began to dance and everyone cleared a place, primarily because the pots were black. After a time the dancers began to wipe their hands on the sooty

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

585 bottoms of the pots and to rub their hands on each other's faces, with other horseplay.

This group included the men and the women [178] who had been working in the kitchen. It is said the custom of the kitchen staff dancing with the kitchen utensils is an old one which is rarely observed now. A number of informants had not seen it for many years, and it was not practiced in other weddings observed. The [184] custom is believed to be peculiar to Cherán.

The godmothers, in the meantime, had been seated again. The groom's father gave them each a small pop bottle of *charanda* with a package of Tigres cigarettes tied with gay ribbons to the neck of the bottle. These are provided by grandchildren of the godmothers. The father also gave each grandmother a small green glazed pottery "barrel" with a tiny spout on top and a cup fitting over the spout; these were also filled with *charanda* and the godmothers ceremonially drank a drop or two from the cup and then began pressing it on others. Each person offered a drink took a drop or two. When most of the small supply of *charanda* in the barrels was gone, large bottles were produced and began to circulate in the crowd. The first large bottle was taken to the shed where the bride's male relatives sat.

The dancing now became general, although for a time the elderly women with breads rushed about charging into people who were not dancing and forcing them to dance. Drinking also became general, and numbers soon showed the effects of the liquor. Several expeditions went out for more bread, accompanied now by the godmothers, who danced rather drunkenly in the streets at the head of the processions. Many women accompanying the procession also danced, but the younger women, especially those carrying babies, merely walked along the sides of the street.

The following day the male first cousins took [605] atole to the groom. The atole was made by the youths' mothers, but the boys had to take the maize to the mill to have it ground and get the ingredients for the atole.

The wedding of Samuel Sánchez, described above in somewhat abbreviated form, was one of the extremes of Cherán marriage. At the [587] other end of the scale was the wedding of a niece of Agustín's. The groom, Juan Gerónimo,

585 587 was a widower but still young. The girl lived with an aunt, for her mother had become a woman of loose morals after having an affair with a worker on the highway and at the moment was in jail in Uruapan for disorderly conduct. The bride's father was dead. Another aunt refused to attend the wedding because she did not approve of the girl's marrying a widower.

In this instance the groom had not stolen the girl but had asked for her, taking bread to the house of the aunt, accompanied by musicians. Agustín, with other relatives of the girl, took her to church for the civil wedding, where she was delivered to the groom's father. She was not returned to her own home and there was no breakfast. As the groom's father was poor, there was no celebration in his house, but at noon the girl's aunt did the best she could to rectify the matter by serving a dinner in her house.

585 At another simple wedding attended, the general forms were gone through in truncated fashion. The dinner was over before 12 o'clock, and immediately following it the groom's father distributed the special breads in the form of crowns. This early distribution indicated that there would be no exchange of clothing on a large scale (although there was a little) and no drinking. There were no music and no dancing, and the affair was over by about 2 p. m.

Another of the weddings observed in some detail presents a number of interesting features. This was the wedding of Samuel Santa Clara, [115] son of the widow, Doña Feliciana, principal informant regarding herbs.

Again, as the families knew each other well and it was certain that the girl's mother, also a widow, would consent, the girl was not stolen. Indeed, Doña Feliciana and her "brothers" went to the girl's house on a Thursday evening and asked for her. There were no music and no marriage manager on this occasion. The following Monday, September 9, Doña Feliciana and all the groom's relatives ate at her house and then went to the bride's house, starting about 2:30 p. m. This hour is early and was arranged for my special benefit so I would be sure to see everything. Unfortunately, I had not been advised of the plan and was not in Cherán that day, but Agustín, who as usual

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
Sierra Tarascans

585 turned out to be a relative, was a member of the party.

Because of the early hour, the marriage manager had not arrived. The party all waited outside until the manager was found and came. The manager prayed, and then the men were given tamales to eat. The women then began exchanging bread and tamales at about 5:30. Later they drank all night and sat around and talked. They would have danced, but Doña Feliciana had provided no music.

On November 9 the groom was learning the prayers and it was intended to hold the wedding soon, but it was postponed until January because the priest said that no one could marry until after Christmas *por los velados*. As Doña Feliciana remarked, "No one knows what these are. This priest is very capricious. We have had various priests here, but never one like this."

554 585 During the interval of waiting, Doña Feliciana made it plain that, as she was a widow, she had no intention of holding a large wedding. The mother of the bride, however, was affronted and sent word that with all the Santa Claras in the town it was a shame they would not do anything. She also announced that although she also was a widow, she intended to pay for a band herself. When word of this got around, the Santa Claras became ashamed and bestirred themselves to see what could be done. Soon Agustín's father was remarking that the Santa Claras had gotten the better of the Rangéls, and perhaps they should do something. When the wedding finally was held by the Santa Claras it turned out to be, if anything, more elaborate than that given by Antonio Sánchez, described above.

585 The distribution of expenses, as it finally turned out, was approximately as follows:

Breakfast for the women—Erino Santa Clara, a "grandfather."

Breakfast for the men—provided by a cousin, a Santa Clara.

Dinner and bread—Emilio Santa Clara, a "grandfather."

One band—Doña Feliciana, the cousins, and uncles (Agustín paid a contribution for this).

Second band—brothers, sisters, and cousins of the groom, "grandfathers" of both bride and groom. (Agustín's father paid a contribution for this.)

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[p. 187b]

● 585

Civil wedding—Domingo Hernández, a "grandfather."
Church wedding—Doña Feliciana.

According to report, Doña Feliciana provided only a new *rebozo* for the bride in the way of clothing, but this was not verified. No data were secured on who paid for the liquor.

The church wedding took place about 7 a. m. on January 9, this being the cheaper hour. The bride was returned to her home, then brought with her relatives to the groom's mother's house for breakfast. After breakfast, the party went to the municipal offices for the civil registry. This order was quite incorrect, as customarily the civil registry should precede the religious ceremony, usually by about a week. After this, matters proceeded as usual with the dinner. The older brother of the groom functioned as the male head of the household. Had the groom had no older brother, Doña Feliciana would have had to discharge the functions of the male head; none of her brothers or those of her deceased husband would have taken this position.

Late in the afternoon a number of poles were brought into the courtyard. Stuck in holes in these poles were many small sticks to which were attached small flaglike ornaments of paper of many colors which were divided among the women and children with a great deal of shouting and disorder (pl. 7, lower left). These banners are not produced at any other time than the period preceding Carnival.

The crownlike breads were not produced until quite late, about 4:30 p. m., and were not distributed until some time later (pl. 7, upper right). In turn, the dancing was late in starting in the groom's house, although it began some time earlier in the house of the grandfather entertaining that group.

Just before dusk the priest arrived and scolded the party for getting drunk. One of the men who took this to heart started home; [674] he was shot and killed while crossing the bridge to Parícutin by an unknown enemy, but none of these events stopped the wedding, which turned into one of the most prolonged large-scale drinking bouts occurring during the time of the study. Atole was served at midnight, while between 4 and 6 a. m. and again at 8 a. m. *posole* was served. The atole was provided by

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

585 Antonio Sánchez (whose son's wedding is the first described) and his brother. The *posole* was provided by the cousins of the groom.

At 10 o'clock the following morning, water for dish washing was carried through the streets accompanied by a band. At 11:30 additional maize was taken to the mill, again accompanied by a band. On both occasions numerous people were dancing with the procession. Several other processions occurred during this and the following day when the wedding finally terminated.

Doña Feliciana estimated the expenses for the wedding to be about $100 for food and bread, paid for by the relatives. Doña Feliciana supplied 9 *fanegas* of maize, worth [435] $36, and paid $25 to one of the bands, and she still owed $20. She also killed a cow with an estimated value of $60. The second band, which did not stay the entire time, was paid $20 by the relatives. This makes a total expense of $261, not counting the fees for the civil registry and the priest. Neither does it include the very considerable quantities of liquor consumed. Doña Feliciana collected $21 in gifts given by her female relatives.

The wedding of Samuel Sánchez mentioned above cost his father $150. In addition, Don Antonio's brothers spent at least $50. Don Antonio also killed a beef, and 7½ *fanegas* of maize was consumed. The civil registry cost $6 and the Mass $13, a total expenditure of approximately $309 exclusive of the liquor.

Alfredo Romero, pointing out that even poor families had to make every effort to give a proper wedding so the parents of the girl would be satisfied, reported that his wedding cost $135, 5½ *fanegas* of maize, and some beans, "and it did not last more than 3 days" (but his group of relatives is smaller and there were fewer guests than at some of the other weddings). He had to buy a beef "which hardly lasted" and there was expense for musicians, bread, lard, salt, onions "and who knows what else." Romero was forced to sell a lot in Parícutin and two small pieces of land, despite aid given him by his relatives.

In general, the attitude of disapproval voiced in the previous paragraph is not shared in Cherán. Although accounts of expense were given with a good deal of headshaking, obviously

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[P.188 b]

585 the majority of persons were rather proud of the amount they had spent. Unquestionably, a wedding is the most extensive and ostentatious 556 display of wealth and social position that exists 585 in Cherán. Attempts in the past by outsiders to suppress the *costumbres* are almost always taken as attempts to suppress the weddings first of all and are met by sullen and dogged resistance. The reaction of Emilio Rojas, godfather of the bride in the Samuel Santa Clara wedding, is fairly typical:

> The custom here is pleasant, except people get very drunk. Well, not everyone, but some. It is good to take something, but not to the point of drunkenness. It is good to dance and be gay. Besides, I like weddings because I always sell something in the way of clothing. [Don Emilio is a storekeeper.]

The social prestige factors involved in weddings revolve about several aspects of the ceremonies. One is the sheer factor of display already mentioned. Whenever any group of people goes through the streets in connection with the wedding, it is accompanied by a band. Furthermore, a direct route is rarely followed. Often a circuitous route two or three times as long as the direct route is used.

Another aspect is the display and exchange of clothing and bread. Every effort is made to show the amount of bread being brought and the quantity of clothing to be exchanged. The clothing is carried on trays, usually lacquered, or in baskets either in the arms or on the head. The majority of the participants bearing clothing come in a single large procession which always makes a special effort to traverse as much of the town as is possible without making the ostentation too evident. The women bearing clothing all sit together for a time after arriving at the groom's house and spread out their clothing to make it look as impressive as possible.

The clothing exchange also has an economic aspect, for the investment involved is very considerable. To some extent, though, the gifts are formalized. Clothing for wedding gifts is usually not as well made as regular clothing. Furthermore, a large part of it is kept for exchange in future weddings. Only if a family does not expect to have any relatives marry for some time to come will it actually use the clothing, unless it is very poor and in need of the

556 garments. Alternatively, some of the clothing
585 may be sold if it is not apt to be needed for gifts. Informants estimated that each garment was exchanged two or three times; probably the estimate is conservative.

The third aspect of the wedding display involves the number of persons who attend.
[602] Every relative must attend a wedding if he
[578] does not wish to create hard feeling. Should a relative fail to appear, his own functions such as weddings, house movings, house roofings, or *mayordomías* would be boycotted by the persons he had affronted. At the wedding of the daughter of such a person as Rosalio Sánchez,
[572] representative of the town, very large numbers of nonrelatives attended in order to show their liking or admiration for the father. Friendship is likewise clearly demonstrated by attending the wedding of a nonrelative.

Resentment and avoidance seem to be the
626 only methods of retaliation for neglect at
585 Cherán. In many other towns there are probably more direct methods. In Charapan, at least, relatives who do not attend a wedding are sought out by their fellows and forcibly brought to the wedding where they have to parade through the kitchen bearing a water bucket.

585 Essential to every wedding, even the simplest, is the marriage manager. In a larger wedding the arrangements are too complex to be known properly to most people and the successful carrying out of the wedding depends on his ability. A fee is paid the marriage manager for his services; the amount apparently was not ascertained, for it does not appear in the notes, but it probably is fairly generous, for the most active of the few marriage managers, Gregorio Castillo, is a fairly prosperous individual.

As a neutral third party, the marriage man-
585 ager also smooths over differences of opinion
584 more successfully than the principals could ordinarily do face to face. This is especially marked when the bride's father is annoyed with the theft of his daughter. For example, at one "pardon," the father had left for the mountains and only an uncle of the girl was in the house. He claimed to be sick and refused to come out of the house for some time. When he did, he gave evidence of anger. Then Don Gregorio

585 584 said, "Well, it is custom. The girl was not forced but went willingly. There is no reason to be angry about this, nor with me, for I am not concerned in the matter but come to speak for the parents of the groom. They have come as is proper to arrange the affair." Late in the evening the father returned and agreed to the marriage, but he said little and clearly was angry.

182 585 602 One aspect of the marriage ceremonies not sufficiently emphasized in the preceding accounts is important: the new marriage means that the two families, in the most extended sense, will constantly cooperate in all sorts of ceremonial occasions. Thus, the groom's male relatives will help to move a house or roof a house, while the bride's female relatives will be called on to work in the kitchen on the same occasions. Both families will likewise be concerned with all the subsequent crisis periods in varying degree, especially when a grandchild marries at some future date.

585 The function of the wedding as an occasion for celebration, the release of tensions through drinking, the provision of diversion with the dancing, and the general stimulus through extensive social interaction is very considerable. For the participants, weddings probably rank as high or higher than fiestas as occasions for social contacts and amusement.

585 987 A feature most clearly demonstrated in the weddings is the much greater participation of the older women. Young women with children usually do not take a very active part in the kitchen work, nor are they leaders in the exchange of clothing. The old women, on the other hand, are in the forefront of all activities. Essentially the wedding is a woman's affair in many respects. Old women are the most active in the kitchen. They are the first to start drinking, although they rarely drink to the excess common among the men, and they are the first to dance. Indeed, on older women the playing of dance music has an almost compulsive effect. Time and again, when dance music is being played, even though it is not time for dancing, some of the old women will be seen quietly dancing by themselves in a corner.

585 587 Although the ceremonies of marriage are most elaborate in the case of first marriages, often marriages of widows or widowers are

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

585 almost as complex, particularly if it is the first
587 marriage of one of the parties. A widow or widower is not expected to marry for 6 months after the death of his or her spouse, but marriage usually occurs soon after that time. Marriage is regarded as the normal state for an adult, and one who does not marry is thought to be queer. "Here they believe that a man without a woman or a woman without a man cannot be either man or woman and they are not respected." Moreover, life is very difficult for the widow or widower. The woman has difficulty getting her fields properly cultivated, even though she may own sufficient property. A man, unless he has relatives who will take him in, also has great difficulty in getting food, for no man knows how to cook. Women do not wish to take a widower as a boarder, fearing either that he will make some attempt on their virtue or that their reputation will suffer. Husbands are also much opposed to such an arrangement, so the widower must marry, if he is to eat decently.

583 In Mestizo Chilchota, Rendón found many similarities with the Cherán wedding customs. The bride is sometimes stolen, sometimes not. If stolen and then not married, the girl finds marriage difficult, and mothers will not let their daughters talk to such a girl. Chilchota residents assert that in the Tarascan villages of La Cañada this is not the case, but such evidence from Mestizos is notoriously unreliable.

Generally the bride is stolen. In Chilchota, Rendón definitely secured the impression that this custom is older than asking for the bride. The bride is taken to the house of a friend or to the godparent of baptism of the bride. According to some women marrying in this way, the marriage was not consummated until after the wedding ceremonies; others said they had relations with their husbands the day they were stolen. If the girl is asked for, rather than stolen, the relatives of the groom take mescal and cigarettes when they visit the bride's parents. They are accompanied by an old man skilled in such matters.

585 The wedding takes place traditionally in the house of the groom, but among the "snobs" it takes place in the house of the bride. Guests take a kilo of salt, a kilo of chiles (preferably dry chiles which are more expensive), several

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[p. 1906]

585 kilos of rice, and a basket of corn or beans. The male relatives of the bride supply one or two loads of wood and also present to the groom agricutural tools if he is a farmer or utensils of his trade if he has some other occupation. The male and female relatives of the groom also dress the bride in a complete new outfit and present her with clothing and household and kitchen equipment. Gifts received by the bride and groom are divided with their respective relatives. The sisters of the groom carry rosaries made of *amole* tubers to indicate that they should wash with this and not with soap. (This statement is ambiguous and needs further investigation; possibly it refers to bathing the bride.)

The church wedding takes place in the early hours of the morning and is followed by a breakfast in the house where the celebration is to be held. Invariably the breakfast consists of bread and chocolate. After breakfast there is a dance, which continues through the day except for intervals in which to eat. The food is *mole* of chicken or turkey, fried rice, beans, and tortillas. After the meal a drink made of [273] pulque and called *charape* is served. If it is [272] not the season for pulque, the *charape* is made of a wild plant resembling the maguey and called timbiriče.

After dancing a while following the dinner, the bride is taken to the house of the godparents of the groom, in case she has been stolen, or to her own parents' house, if she has been asked for. The bride spends the night at this house without her husband. Some time during the day the sisters of the groom wash the bride and dress her.

The following day the godparents of the wedding hold a fiesta in their house similar to that on the preceding day but with some additional features. Early in the morning, when the invited guests arrive, they are served breakfast of bread and chocolate made with water. Then there is dancing. At midday a dinner is served, consisting of many of the typical Tarascan foods such as čurípo (beef broth with cabbage, chile, and meat), kurúndas (yellow tamales), chayote, and cooked squash (*chilacayote*).

About 3 o'clock in the afternoon, while the dancing goes on in the house of the godparents of the wedding, the godparents of baptism of

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[p. 191a]
Sierra Tarascans
La Cañada
Mestizo

585 both the bride and groom organize a group to carry the atole. A large *olla* is filled with atole. The *olla* is decorated with green branches, flowers, and paper streamers. A carrying basket full of bread and bottles of *aguardiente* is also carried. The atole can be of whatever type is usual at the season of the year, while the bread must be of the type known as *pan grueso*, "thick bread." Various members of the group take turns carrying the bread and atole. At each corner the person carrying the bread or atole dances, while his companions circle about him.

A group of relatives by marriage of the groom known as the "cats" now attempt to take away the *olla* of atole. They carry bundles of nettles and similar plants and strike the bearers of the atole until they succeed in getting it away. They carry it to a store and "sell" it for *aguardiente* or cigarettes.

Another group, known as the sisters, *hermanas*, composed of consanguineal relatives of the groom, attempt to defend the *olla* of atole. When it is finally stolen, they must "buy" it back from the storekeeper for the value of the goods given to the "cats." This is repeated several times before the atole is finally brought to the house of the godparents about sundown.

The godparents of the wedding meantime have strung a rope across the street and receive the group with the atole with lighted splinters of pitch pine to symbolize their late arrival. For a time the party with the atole are not allowed to pass the rope, but eventually they climb over or under it and get into the house.

The godparents of baptism now give the godparents of the marriage *charape*, mescal, and cigarettes. In return they receive presents of clothing and mescal. In the Tarascan villages of La Cañada it is said the exchange of clothing is much more extensive. A supper is served of tamales, *bunuelos* (a sort of fried bread dough dipped in sugar), and *charape*, and there is more dancing. Later the bride is carried to the house of the parents or relatives of the groom. The relatives of the bride are present. Female relatives of the bride toast chiles on a *comal*, and the groom has to enter the smoke to prove that he is a man. The bride is now given to the groom.

596569—46——14

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

585 The following day there is a ritual meal in the house of the bride to which come the bride's relatives and many friends. The women of Chilchota often dress in traditional Tarascan costume for this meal, wearing the *rollo* or pleated skirt. They also wear straw hats much decorated with flowers and paper streamers. Men dress in *calzones* or trousers of Indian style. If they have money, a band is hired and the group dances at every corner. The meal served consists of boiled cabbage (without meat or meat broth) and beef tripe cooked with herbs and chile.

Soon after the wedding, the groom takes the bride's parents one or two large baskets of bread, chocolate, sugar, and from $10 to $100 (depending on his economic status) to show his thanks. There is some sort of ceremony in the house of the bride's parents.

585 In San Juan Parangaricutiro, also primarily
535 a Mestizo town, the male and female relatives of the bride dance in the streets on the day of the wedding. The group has a band and dances at each street intersection in the town, the men in one file, and the women in another. The men make a circuit of the women's file and return to their places. The women do the same and then the group moves to another corner. The persons in the files are arranged according to their stature. A sister of the bride accompanies the group, and represents her. The night after the wedding the relatives of the groom do the same, lighting their way with pitch pine torches.

588 A dozen or more families in Cherán live in
586 "free union," that is, a couple lives together without marriage. In most cases one or both parties to the arrangement have been married previously and divorced according to Cherán standards but not according to law. The majority of such free unions are said to result in successful households, and children of such unions suffer no stigma. Children of free unions inherit from their parents in the same fashion as children of legal or church marriages. This type of union is said to be fairly recent, and at first persons living in this fashion were not permitted by the priest to hold any church office or to act as godparents. Children of free unions were also refused baptism. In

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

588 recent years it is said that these restrictions
586 have disappeared.

One reason for the free union is the difficulty of securing a legal divorce. Such a divorce can be granted only by a court of first instance (*juzgado de primer instancia*). The nearest court of this kind is in Uruapan, and to secure a divorce requires many trips to Uruapan and an outlay of more money than most Cherán residents can afford. Moreover, most people do not understand the needed steps.

586 Causes of divorce are drunkenness, wife beating, failure to support the family, or abandoning the family for another woman on the part of the man. On the part of the woman, infidelity is an important cause. Lack of children is rarely if ever the direct cause of divorce, and is not recognized as a sufficient reason. Incompatibility evidently may play a part also. Uncles and grandfathers of the married couple and the godparents of the marriage intervene if a marriage is not going smoothly, and attempt to persuade the couple to change their habits.

In all cases of divorce for whatever cause, the officials of the *municipio* investigate. If they find the divorce not justified, the officials may force the couple to continue living together. If the causes are deemed sufficient, the officials do not interfere, although they may supervise disposition of children so that they will have the best care. If children are less than 6 or 7 they are usually put in charge of the mother. Over that age they are usually given to the parent best able to rear them properly. If the mother is industrious and the father a drunkard, the children will be given to the mother, but if the mother is careless of her obligations, the father will receive the children. Dislike or quarrels rarely arise between relatives of a divorced couple. In free unions, as in mar-
[593] riages of widows or widowers, sometimes a parent is jealous of the spouse's children by a previous marriage, sometimes not.

ADULT LIFE

895 Entry into adult status is closely associated
585 with marriage. Normally a child is not consulted in family affairs until he is married; the only exceptions are a few families where youths have not married at the customary ages. Usu-

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

ally by the time of marriage, individuals of both sexes have mastered the essential technologies for carrying on life.

Nevertheless, marriage rarely if ever means complete independence for either sex. The couple almost invariably lives with the groom's parents after the marriage, usually for a year or longer. Even if the husband has enough resources to set up a separate establishment, he will rarely do so until after the first child is born and often he will not do so for several years.

For the wife, this appears to be a somewhat difficult time. She is definitely under the thumb of her mother-in-law and for the first month after the wedding she is supposed to get up before daylight and make atole for everyone living in her new home. She is sent on errands and given orders constantly. Nevertheless, the difficulties can easily be overemphasized by a person from outside the culture. The bride is called "daughter" by her mother-in-law and in large measure is treated exactly as a daughter would be. In the relatively few instances in which it was possible to observe behaviors, outwardly a friendly and perhaps even affectionate relationship existed between mother and daughter-in-law, although one woman said she greatly feared her parents-in-law, who were very hard on her.

Although the daughter-in-law appears to be imposed upon by her mother-in-law to some extent, in some sense this is part of the process of gaining adult status and of the retirement of the parents to a less active life. The father does less work in the fields and leaves more and more of the harder labor and more and more of the responsibility to his son. In the same way, the mother leaves more and more of the running of the house to her daughter-in-law. If the parents have worked hard and have accumulated a reasonable amount of property, some of which they have probably expended in giving their children a proper marriage, it is considered right and proper that they should begin to work less hard.

[85] After a year or more of marriage, or after the birth of the first child, some change of status will begin to occur. In a minority of cases, a new kitchen will be prepared and the young couple will move out of the *"troje"* where

1: Beals E-5 (1940-1941) 1946

NU34 Tarasco NU34
Sierra Tarascans

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ROOFING FIESTA AND WEDDING.

Upper (left): Men eating at a house-roofing fiesta; baskets of tortillas, jars of water, and dishes of salt lie on the ground. Remaining photographs, a Cherán wedding. *Upper (right):* Preparing to distribute bread, while one of the godmothers oversees the work. *Lower (left):* Bringing in paper ornaments for distribution. *Right (middle):* The godmothers and close relatives of the groom. *Lower (right):* Tying a ribbon in a godmother's hair.

[End Plate 7]

342 weddings, funerals, and *mayordomías*. In the latter type of ceremony, the image of a saint is kept in the house for a year. However, as the use of the house is incidental in all these cases, the ceremonies will not be described. It may be noted, however, that probably the image of a saint would not be entrusted to a family unless it had adequate housing for it. Another special 342 feature in connection with weddings is also worth 585 mentioning. The most important ceremonial directly associated with a structure takes place, not in the house, but in the kitchen. This is a [608] ceremony where all the close relatives of the bride and groom enter into the relationship of the *compadrazgo*, that is, they assume the relationship of godparents to each others' children.

SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

342 The house is involved in a number of social usages and obligations. As a piece of moveable property, it may be sold or inherited independently of the land on which it stands. Sale or inheritance follows the same rules as exist for other property, however. As these rules will be treated in another paper, they will not be repeated here.

Residence rules operate with respect to houses. 591 Normally, after marriage, the bride and groom live for a time in the house of the groom's father. This may continue for several years, but, usually after the birth of a child, if not before, an effort will be made to establish the son in a house of his own. This may be done merely by erecting a separate kitchen for the new household. Ideally, however, the son will have a lot, house, and kitchen of his own. In exceptional cases, however, the family remains as a unit until the death of the father. All the sons live on the same lot, and the father directs economic activities and controls the family treasury. Such a household is said always to separate after the death of the father.

Ownership of a house entails numerous com- 651 munity obligations. A house owner, first of all, must pay taxes to the Federal Government through the local tax office. A percentage of these taxes goes to the municipal government also. The house owner is responsible for the re- 361 pair and cleaning of the street in front of his property. This is not strictly enforced; only street cleaning is demanded and this ordinarily